(b) if so, the total value of financial losses suffered on this account during the last three years;

(c) whether financial position of farmers in Bihar has deteriorated due to the said destruction every year; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken so far by Government to improve financial position of the farmers of Bihar and also for compensating them financially every year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) Whenever severe flooding or cyclones occur loss of human, plant and animal life is to some extent inevitable and Bihar is no exception to this phenomenon. Loss of human and animal life due to failure of rains is, however, a thing of the past. Arrangements exist to provide relief to victims of natural calamities as per awards of the Finance Commissions. Compensation to farmers is also admissible under the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme.

Handing over the Indian Drugs & Pharmaceuticals Ltd. to workers' Unions

2770. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to hand-over Hyderabad Unit of Indian Drugs & Pharmaceuticals Limited to the workers' unions;

(b) whether there is scope for private sector participation in the revival package;

(c) whether the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) is being extended to the employees of the unit; and

(d) if so, by when it would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The unit at Hyderabad is only one of the units of Indian Drugs & Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (IDPL). IDPL is a sick company under reference to the Board for Industrial and

Financial Reconstruction (BIFR). A communication has been sent to the BIFR intimating the concessions/facilities for cleaning up of the balance sheets of IDPL that the Government intends to provide to facilitate its privatisation through the induction of strategic partners.

(c) and (d) A decision has also been taken to introduce VRS in IDPL after finalisation of the package thereof.

Clearance to KRIBHCO for Gorakhpur Project

2771. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the specific reasons for not according final clearance to KRIBHCO for its Gorakhpur Project, for which in principle approval was accorded in October, 1997;

(b) whether it is a fact that KRIBHCO has surplus funds to the extent of Rs. 1600 crores which are not being allowed to be invested in projects which has direct bearing on the production of fertilizer and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) by when, Gorakhpur Project would be finally cleared and start operations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (c) The proposed Gorakhpur Fertilizer Project of Krishak Bharati Cooperative Ltd. (KRIBHCO), along with three other proposed urea projects in the Public/Cooperative sector was approved 'in principle' by the Government in April 1999, subject to investment appraisal of these projects by the Public Investment Board (PIB). Investment appraisal of these urea projects was undertaken by the PIB in July, 1999. In June 2000, a proposal for taking a final investment decision on these projects was considered and deferred by the Government. This proposal was formulated taking into account the observations of the PIB regarding the viability of the projects, desirability of encouraging use of liquefied natural gas as feedstock to reduce the incidence of subsidy and the need to